



# On the Western Front with the Rainbow Division: A World War I Diary

*Vernon E. Kniptash*

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*An ordinary soldier's day-by-day account of the Great War*

Vernon E. Kniptash, an Indiana national guardsman who served in the Rainbow Division during World War I, observed firsthand some of the Great War's fiercest fighting. As a radio operator with the Headquarters Company of the 150th Field Artillery, he was in constant contact with French and British forces as well as with American troops, and thus gained a broad perspective on the hostilities. Editor E. Bruce Geelhoed introduces and annotates Kniptash's war diaries, published here for the first time.

With clarity and compelling detail, Kniptash describes the experiences of an ordinary soldier thrust into the most violent conflict the world had seen. He tells of his enthusiasm upon enlistment and of the horrors of combat that followed, as well as the drudgery of daily routine. He renders unforgettable profiles of his fellow soldiers and commanders, and manages despite the strains of warfare to leaven his writing with humor.

Readers will share Kniptash's ordeals as he participates in the furious effort to stem a major German offensive, followed by six months of violent combat and the massive Allied counteroffensive that ended the war. Because Kniptash was called to remain with the Army of Occupation in Germany after his unit was shipped home, his diaries cover the full extent of American participation in the war.

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